

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 284983

EXDIS FOR AMBASSADOR YOUNG FROM UNA

FOLLOWING REPEAT BRIDGETOWN 2893 ACTION SECSTATE IMMEDIATE
INFO PORT OF SPAIN NOV 28

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L BRIDGETOWN 2893

EXDIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN

PORT OF SPAIN FOR THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, TT

SUBJ: THE MOOD IN TRINIDAD

REF: PORT OF SPAIN 3547

1. REFLECTING ON MY MEETING WITH TRINIDADIAN FOREIGN MINISTER
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AND OTHER CONVERSATIONS IN TRINIDAD AND HERE IN BARBADOS, I
AM CONVINCED THAT PM WILLIAMS' MALAISE OF THE PAST FEW MONTHS
IS DUE PARTLY TO PIQUE STEMMING FROM HIS PERCEPTION THAT WE
DID NOT ATTACH SUFFICIENT IMPORTANCE TO HIS IDEAS FOR CARIB-
BEAN PROGRAMS OR REPLY EARLY ENOUGH TO THEM. IN ADDITION,
HE FEELS WE HAVE CONDONED OR EVEN PARTICIPATED IN ACTIVITIES
WHICH FACILITATE VENEZUELAN PENETRATION OF THE REGION AND

TEND TO DISPLACE HIM FROM THE LEADERSHIP ROLE HE ASSUMED IN CARIBBEAN REGIONAL ASSOCIATION. HE IS ALSO RESENTFUL ABOUT CONTINUED FISCAL IRRESPONSIBILITY IN GUYANA, AND ESPECIALLY IN JAMAICA, TO WHICH THE GOTT HAS GIVEN CONSIDERABLE AID. IT IS FOR THESE REASONS THAT THE TRINIDADIAN GOVT HAS INSISTED ON A STRONG ROLE FOR THE IMF IN CARIBBEAN COOPERATION, AND IS AVERSE TO A STRONG ROLE FOR THE IDB AND THE CDB. HE HAS NOW ACCEPTED WORLD BANK LEADERSHIP.

2. UNDERLYING WILLIAMS' CONCERN WITH FISCAL IRRESPONSIBILITY AND INSISTENCE THAT BALANCE OF PAYMENTS PROBLEMS RECEIVE HIGHEST PRIORITY IN ANY COOPERATIVE EFFORT, LIES FEAR FOR THE FUTURE OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM) WHICH WILLIAMS HELPED TO FATHER. A TRADE WAR TOUCHED OFF BY THE CURRENT BALANCE OF PAYMENTS DIFFICULTIES COULD SHATTER CARICOM. FINALLY, OUR FAILURE TO GRANT EXIM FINANCING FOR THE STEEL PROJECT TURNED HIS DISAPPOINTMENT AND CONCERN INTO ANGER.

3. THE BUDGET PROCESS IN TRINIDAD, WHICH EXTENDS THROUGH DECEMBER, IS THE CENTERPIECE OF POLITICAL LIFE, AND THE GOVT IS USING IT AS A PRETEXT TO NOT GET INVOLVED IN ANYTHING THAT DISTRACTS PUBLIC ATTENTION. I EXPECT TRINIDAD TO BE REPRESENTED AT THE DECEMBER MEETING IN WASHINGTON ON CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT, BUT PERHAPS NOT AT THE

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MINISTERIAL LEVEL. OVERALL, I EXPECT OUR RELATIONS TO BE ENTERING A PERIOD OF SOME COOLNESS AND DISTANCE. ORTIZ UNQUOTE VANCE

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